REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

The action by the Examiner in this application, together with the cited references, has

been given careful consideration. Following such consideration, claims 16, 21 and 31 have been

amended to delete reference to a "divalent state." In addition, claim 21 has been amended to

refer to "lead dioxide." It is respectfully submitted that foregoing amendments place claims 16,

21 and 31 in condition for allowance.

Claims 1, 3, 11, 17 and 23 have also been amended to eliminate reference to a "divalent

state." Claims 17 and 23 have further been amended to indicate that the metal oxide in a

tetravalent state interacts with a sterilant in a "catalytic reaction."

The Examiner has rejected the claims primarily in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,196,052 to

May et al. Applicant acknowledges the Examiner's comments with respect to the May et al.

reference, but respectfully submits that the May et al. reference does not teach, suggest or show a

metal oxide in a tetravalent state that exhibits a catalytic reaction with hydrogen peroxide.

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims in their present form, that define a metal oxide in a

tetravalent state that exhibits a catalytic reaction with hydrogen peroxide, are distinguishable

from the May et al. reference which is silent as to a metal oxide that exhibits a catalytic reaction.

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Application No. 10/663,593

Amendment dated January 25, 2006

RESPONSE TO FINAL OFFICE ACTION dated January 10, 2006

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider the claims in their present form in view of the foregoing comments, and allow the application.

Respectfully submitted,

Date:	January	25,	2006	

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.8

I hereby certify that this correspondence (along with any paper referenced as being attached or enclosed) is being deposited on the below date with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to MAIL STOP AF, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

Date:	January 25, 2006	Christine Gallner		
		Christine Goellner		